

Dunsmuir S, Leadbetter J, Gibbs S. [Supervision](#). *Educational and Child Psychology* 2015, 32(3), 6-7.

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Date deposited:

02/08/2016



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Editorial

This issue of Educational and Child Psychology is devoted to the topic of supervision in psychological practice and is timely in its publication. The last occasion an issue devoted to this topic was published was 1993 (Educational and Child Psychology, 10(2)). A comparison of the topics, figures and key issues and themes then and now makes for interesting reading.

Supervision is a requirement of professional practice in the UK, and may be regarded as an integral part of the regular discourse of educational psychologists (EPs) in terms of their daily routines, and when addressing new developments and initiatives. However, there has been a dearth of articles about supervision and thus it was felt that a special collection of papers was overdue. The range of supervision related topics included in this issue is impressive and, through descriptions of localised initiatives across the country, these give an overview of the changing contexts within which educational psychologists work. As editors, we were impressed with the care and detail with which specific small scale schemes have been implemented and evaluated. These examples may help others who are developing practice in their own settings.

Two large scale studies are also included in this edition. First, *Dunsmuir, Lang and Leadbetter* report the results of a recent on-line questionnaire which gives a picture of the proportion of EPs that are both receiving and providing supervision. The findings are discussed against the background of UK guidelines (BPS Division of Educational and Child Psychology) on professional supervision that were published in 2010. The second large scale study contained in this collection is described by *Hill et al*, who examine how supervision supports learning within the professional training of Educational Psychologists.

Papers that are more philosophical, theoretical or organisational in content are included in this edition and these serve to provide reflection on processes as well as offering new perspectives on the nature of supervision. *Ayres, Clarke and Large* outline how an effective, comprehensive and evolving model has been implemented in a large service, using key principles to guide practice. *Halusi and Maggs* describe how work discussion groups have drawn upon psychodynamic theory and have shown how this can be used as a method of professional supervision with teachers. The paper by *Bartle* explores relational aspects of supervision from a psychoanalytic perspective and draws upon theoretical concepts such as projective identification within the discussion.

Collaborative and peer supervision featured strongly in submitted papers and it is clear that such developments have clear advantages for EPs and others involved. *Rawlins and Cowell* describe a phenomenological study which examines how a group of EPs working in the same service use group supervision and how within this, multi-layered processes develop. Also using group supervision, *Soni* describes an

initiative whereby learning mentors were supported to use group supervision. Such developments, where EPs provide supervision for others, is evidently an expanding area of practice. A third approach involving group supervision is explored by *Bartle and Trevis* and shows how group supervision was used with staff who support young people in specialised provision. These three papers attest to the positive impact of group supervision for participants.

Collaborative and peer supervision is combined in a development described by *Corlett*, who considers how models of practice can be sustained beyond training into work in the field. From this, an overarching framework of professional support is proposed. A similar strand of practice is described by *Mills and Swift* who write as trainee EPs and report how peer supervision can support the development of skills and contribute to improved well-being.

The range of topics and approaches included here under the umbrella of supervision is stimulating. We suggest the ideas and evidence presented could form a basis for the further development of theory and practices that support and validate the work of applied psychologists.

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(Editors)